

YICHI ZHANG

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Portfolio: <https://yichi886.wixsite.com/my-site>

Research Interests: XR, HCI, Serious Game, Cognitive Science and Rehabilitation

EDUCATION

Northeastern University

Sep. 2024- Expected May 2028, Boston, US

Ph.D. in Interdisciplinary Design & Media

GPA: 4.00/4.00 (Current)

Main Courses: Research Methods, Game Design, Statistics, Biometric Analysis, Cognitive Science, etc.

Northeastern University

Sep. 2022-May.2024, Boston, US

M.Sc. in Game Science and Design

GPA: 3.875/4.00

Main Courses: Game Research, Interactive Design, User Experience Design, Game Design (concept, level, mechanism and art design, etc.

University of Washington

Sep.2017-June.2021, Seattle, US

B.A. in Architectural Design

GPA: 3.55/4.00

Main Courses: Architecture history and research, Architectural design (structural engineering, Graphic and 3D art, Physical modeling)

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Playful Mind Lab

May. 2023-Present, Boston, US

Research Assistant

- Specialized in creating digital design work for research experiments, encompassing visual and environment design, and interactive experience to produce essential materials for experimental procedures
- Worked with programmers, data analysts, project managers to run pilot experiments toward clinical trials and HCI design studies.
- Familiar with working with older adults, with experiences of human subjective studies, Moca / KBIT / NIH Toolbox, HR monitor and eye-tracker sensors usage and analysis.
- Conducting research on the psychological benefits and engagement performance of gamified reminiscence VR experience for older adults.

Games For Life

May. 2023-Present, Boston, US

Research Assistant

- Co-led the design and execution of the SAGE project, an AI-driven system to enhance accessibility in digital games for older adults
- Designed and conducted surveys with 600+ participants aged 50+, examining gaming behaviors, accessibility challenges, and attitudes toward AI

- Design and led participatory research activities (brainstorming and co-design); facilitated online sessions using Zoom and Miro
- Developed design frameworks linking player challenges to AI-supported interventions, and contributed to research outputs at the intersection of HCI, game design, and aging

INTERN EXPERIENCE

Shandong Provincial Architectural Design and Research Institute *June.2020-Agu.2020, Jinan, China*
Assistant Architect

- Specialized in computer-aided design software such as Sketchup, Blender and Rhino to carry out preliminary design and final effect presentation
- Conducted user-based research on user experience, design aesthetic and structural engineering design
- Prepared plans and cost estimates and detailed specifications for commercial development projects.

SKILLS

Professional Skills

Game Design: Unity

Modeling and Design: Rhino, Blender, Maya, ADOBE AI/PS/ID/PR/AE/SP

Office Softwares: Word, Excel, Powerpoints, etc.

Tools & Methods: R Studio, NVivo, Qualtrics, Zoom, Miro

Other Skills

Laser-cutting, 3D Printing, Wood-working

Language Proficiency

Chinese (Mandarin) : Native

English: Fluent

Certificate

CITI Certificate in Social & Behavioral Research

PUBLICATIONS

Zhang, Y., Lyman, B., Pearce, C., Kim, M., Harteveld, C., Chukoskie, L., & De Schutter, B. (2026). Integrating artificial intelligence as assistive technology for older adult gamers: A pilot study. *Journal of Games, Self, & Society (Games for Good 2025 Conference Proceedings)*, 4, 127–153. IThrive Games / History Co & Play Story Press. <https://doi.org/10.17613/wvepr-20076>

Lyman, B., Zhang, Y., Pearce, C., Kim, M., Harteveld, C., Chukoskie, L., & De Schutter, B. (2026). AI, aging well, and accessible digital games: The supplemental role of AI in accessible game design for older adults. *The Gerontologist*, gnag055. <https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/gnag055>

Qian, Y., Schwartz, A., Zhang, Y., Kramer, A. F., & Chukoskie, L. (2025, January). *Evaluating the*

cognitive impact of exergames in community-dwelling older adults: A systematic review and meta-analysis. JMIR Preprints. <https://doi.org/10.2196/preprints.72031>

Qian, Y., Schwartz, A., Jung, A., Zhang, Y., Seitz, U., Wilds, G., Kim, M., Kramer, A. F., & Chukoskie, L. (2024, June). *The Influence of Separate and Combined Exercise and Foreign Language Acquisition on Learning and Cognition*. Brain Sciences, 14(6), 572. <https://doi.org/10.3390/brainsci14060572>

Qian, Y., Schwartz, A. M., Zhang, Y., Jung, A., Wilds, G., Seitz, U., Kim, M., Kramer, A. F., & Chukoskie, L. (2024, May). *Promoting cognitive health in older adults through an exercise game centered around foreign language learning*. In *Extended abstracts of the CHI conference on human factors in computing systems* (Article 271, 7 pages). Association for Computing Machinery. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3613905.3650959>

Reports and Other Publications:

Zhang, Y., Lyman, B., Harteveld, C., Pearce, C., Kim, M., De Schutter, B., & Chukoskie, L. (2025). Exploring 50+ adults' gaming experiences and AI perceptions [Research Report]. Games for Life, Northeastern University. <https://doi.org/10.17760/D20794596>

AWARDS

NEU MS Game Science and Design Award, Department of Art + Design	2024, Boston, US
NEU GSS Scholarship Recipient (Covers 40% Tuition)	2022-2023, Boston, US

ACTIVITIES

Team Leader & Designer	Feb.2023, Boston, US
Global Game Jam 2022	
Project Management, Concept Design, Level Design Game Art	

Student Team Leader & Designer	Mar.2021-June.2021, Seattle, US
Westport South Beach Coastal Resilience Project	
Design Research, Architectural Design, Urban Planning, Landscape Design	

Student Assistant	Sep.2019-June.2021, Seattle, US
UW Laser-cutting Studio Student Assistant	
Studio Schedule Management, Machine Maintenance, Operating Guiding and Advising	

Student Representative	Sep.2019-June.2021, Seattle, US
CSSA Representative of Building Environment College	
Student Recruitment, Application Guidance, Academic Q&A, Student-Department Contact Assistance	